

Vaccine Policy

~We firmly believe in the effectiveness of vaccines to prevent serious illness and to save lives.

~We firmly believe in the safety of our vaccines.

~We firmly believe that all children and young adults should receive all of the recommended vaccines according to the schedule published by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP).

~We firmly believe, based on all available literature, evidence, and current studies, that vaccines do not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

~We firmly believe that thimerosal, a preservative that has been in vaccines for decades and remains in some vaccines, does not cause autism or other developmental disabilities.

~We firmly believe that vaccinating children and young adults may be the single most important health promoting intervention we perform as health care providers, and that you can support as parents/caregivers.

The recommended vaccines and the schedule of administration are the results of years and years of scientific study and data-gathering on millions of children by thousands of our brightest scientists and physicians.

The vaccine campaign is truly a victim of its own success. It is precisely because vaccines are so effective at preventing illness that we are even discussing whether or not they should be given. Because of vaccines, many of you have never seen a child with polio, tetanus, whooping cough, bacterial meningitis, or even chickenpox, or known a friend or family member whose child died of one of these diseases. Such success can make us complacent or even lazy about vaccinating. But such an attitude, if it becomes widespread, can only lead to tragic results.

Over the past several years, many people in Europe have chosen not to vaccinate their children with the MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccine after publication of an unfounded suspicion (later retracted) that the vaccine caused autism. As a result of under-immunization, there have been small outbreaks of measles and several deaths from complications of measles in Europe over the past several years. The United States

experienced a record number of measles cases during 2014, with 667 cases from 27 states reported to [CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases](#) (NCIRD). This is the greatest number of cases since measles elimination was documented in the U.S. in 2000.

Furthermore, we firmly believe that by not vaccinating your child, you are taking selfish advantage of thousands of others who do vaccinate their children, which decreases the likelihood that a child will contract one of these diseases. We feel such an attitude to be self-centered and unacceptable. Even delaying or “breaking up the vaccines” to give one or two at a time over additional visits goes against expert recommendations, is not supported by any scientific data, can lead to unnecessary delays and errors, and can put your child, other children, and adults at risk for serious illness (or even death). It is therefore against our medical advice as professionals at **Washington Avenue Pediatrics**.

As medical professionals, we feel very strongly that vaccinating children on schedule with currently available vaccines is absolutely the right thing to do for all children and young adults. We are making you aware of these facts not to scare you or coerce you, but to emphasize the importance of vaccinating your child. We are more than willing to discuss any questions you may have about vaccines, but do require all new patients to our practice to adhere to the vaccination schedule endorsed by the [American Academy of Pediatrics](#) (AAP).